

available in this year.

(d)	1993-94	-	Rs. 417.00 crores
	1994-95	-	Rs. 479.00 crores
	1995-96	-	Rs. 575.00 crores

(e) Yes, Sir.

#### Construction of air strip at Darjeeling

4042. SHRI R.B. RAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether an air-strip is under construction at Rungbull district in Darjeeling Hills;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the construction work is being executed by the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council;

(c) whether the Government have approved this project and allotted funds for the same; and

(d) if so, the amount allotted and released so far?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### Gauge Conversion

4043. SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gauge conversion work of Hassan-Mangalore railway line is going on as per schedule;

(b) if so, the total funds earmarked for this work and the time by which the above work is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not completing the work within the scheduled time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir. Hassan-Sakleshpur will be completed by September'97 and the rest of the line by December'98.

(b) The cost of the project is Rs. 185 crore of the which Rs. 64.08 crore is likely to be spent by 31.03.97. Rs. 24.00 crore has been provided in 97-98.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

#### Halt of Trains at Mankapur Junction

4044. SHRIMATI KETAKI DEVI SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that

Mankapur is a big Junction in Uttar Pradesh and a big telephone factory is also there but inspite of it, no important train has its halt there due to which the residents of Mankapur have to face great inconvenience;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to provide halt of some trains (such as Vaishali Express and Amrapali Express) at Mankapur Junction keeping in view the constant inflow of passengers there;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) 11 trains in one direction and 12 in the other are presently stopping at Mankapur Junction providing direct service from Mankapur to Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Cochin, Hyderabad, Guwahati, Lucknow, Barauni, etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Not found justified.

#### Stoppage to Express Trains at Bilha Nagar Railway Station

4045. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHLE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposed to provide stoppage to Sarnath Express, Ahmedabad-Howrah Express and Link Express at Bilha Nagar (Bilaspur) Railway Station in Madhya Pradesh for the benefit of the citizens;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the income accrued by the Government from the said Railway Station during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

[English]

#### Opening of New Divisions

4046. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals for opening new Divisions in Western Railway received by the Government, Division-wise;

(b) the number of proposals out of them accepted, Division-wise; and

(c) the criteria adopted in acceptance of these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) During last 2 years 11 representations had been received for opening of new divisional offices on Western Railway at Ahmedabad and one for Udaipur. Keeping the various factors into consideration, the Government has decided to set up 8 new divisions at Agra, Ahmedabad, Ranchi, Raipur, Rangiya, Pune, Guntur and Singrauli.

(c) New divisions are set up keeping in view factors like size, workload and accessibility, traffic patterns and other operating/administrative requirements etc. consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency.

[Translation]

#### **New Telephone Exchanges**

4047. SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any demand/scheme/proposal for opening Telephone Exchanges in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise and location-wise; and

(c) the steps taken so far or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The commissioning programme for 1997-98 has not yet been finalised. However, as per policy of the Department, a new exchange is planned at a place when the registered demand reaches 10 or more.

[English]

#### **Apna Net**

4048. SHRI VIJAY PATEL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether recently launched Apna Net by a group of post graduate students has gained astonishing popularity;

(b) if so, whether the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited has blocked the site of Apna Net;

(c) whether it is tantamount to denial of consumers rights; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (c) Apna Net is a registered Website with Internic, USA connected to a leased line (128 kilobits/sec) of VSNL's Gateway Internet Access

Service. No data is available to judge its popularity. Access to Apna Net has been temporarily Disabled by Vadish Sanchar Nigam Ltd. due to repeated violation of agreement between VSNL and subscriber (Apna Net).

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) to (c) above.

#### **First Class Privilege Pass**

4049. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the First Class Privilege Pass issued in favour of railway employees are not allowed to travel in Rajdhani Express and Shatabdi Express in Chair Car and Three Tier A/C sleeper class;

(b) if so, the reasons and justification thereof;

(c) whether the Government have even examined the Financial and Social aspects of denying First Class privilege pass holders to travel in Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) First Class Holders are allowed to travel in III AC in Rajdhani Expresses and Chair Car in Shatabdi Express trains, subject to certain restriction on the number of berths/seats to be booked against one privilege pass.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

#### **Communication System**

4050. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to cyclone and rains in Andhra Pradesh during 1996, the major communication systems damaged in almost every part of State;

(b) if so, the details of loss suffered on account of this;

(c) whether all the communication systems have since been repaired; and

(d) if so, the total expenditure involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir. Due to cyclone and rains during 1996, the communication systems were affected only in East Godavari, West Godavari, Anantpur, Cuddapah, Nellore and Prakasham District of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) The Revenue loss suffered on account of this is estimated to be about Rs. 1.15 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The total expenditure involved is about Rs. 3,85,63,665/-.